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REPORT

50X1-HUM

CD NO.

COUNTRY China
 SUBJECT Economic - Agriculture
 HOW PUBLISHED Daily newspaper
 WHERE PUBLISHED Hong Kong
 DATE PUBLISHED 10 Sep 1951
 LANGUAGE Chinese

DATE OF INFORMATION 1951

DATE DIST. 6 Nov 1951

NO. OF PAGES 2

SUPPLEMENT TO REPORT NO.

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SOURCE Hsing-tao Jih-pao.REVIEWS AGRICULTURAL CONDITIONS IN EAST CHINA, AUGUST 1951

During August, East China farmers struggled against floods, drought, a hurricane, and agricultural pests.

Floods in northern Anhwei affected over 4,090,000 mou [one mou equals 1/6 acre]. Most of the fields were salvaged, but of those that were saved, 30 percent required reseeded. In Shantung, 10,170,000 mou of farm land were affected by floods, but the damage was not great. Four million catties [one catty equals 1 1/3 pounds] of foodstuffs were sent to the stricken areas for relief.

The 18 - 22 August hurricane damaged crops in some areas of Fukien, Chekiang, and Kiangsu. The early rice harvest for 1951 was generally good. In some places, increases of 20 to 30 percent over 1950 were recorded.

During August, the farmers in East China were busy combatting natural calamities and alleviating the damage caused by agricultural pests, flood, drought, and the recent hurricane. Now, in early September, the farmers are proceeding with the autumn harvest, seed selection, and preparation for autumn sowing.

After the mid-July flood, East China, not counting Shantung and Fukien; mobilized over 3 million farmers to fight the flood and salvage the crops. The worst flooded area was in northern Anhwei where more than 4,090,000 mou of farm lands were affected. Efforts by 1,570,000 peasants there salvaged 75 percent of the fields. Only lake-fields and low areas were lost. Of the fields that were salvaged, 50 percent are expected to recover and produce normal yields, 20 percent are expected to yield 80 percent of normal, and 30 percent needed reseeded. The reseeded has already been completed.

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In Shantung, the picture is similar. Due to heavy rains in the latter part of July and early August, many levees in the province were broken by swollen rivers. Statistics up to 30 August, showed that over 10,170,000 mou of farm land were flooded. Party organizations and government agencies have been vigorously assisting the peasants to combat the flood and save the crop. Most of the fields were salvaged. For example, about 90 percent of the flooded 780,000 mou area in Chiang-wei Special Administrative District were saved. On 16 August, the provincial government sent three observation and comfort teams to the stricken areas. In the meantime, 4 million catties of foodstuffs were sent to these areas for relief. The East China Military and Administrative Committee has also sent teams to the area to comfort the victims and report on conditions.

The hurricane from the South China Sea, 16 - 22 August, caused some damage in Fukien, Chekiang, southern Kiangsu and the coastal region of northern Kiangau. The wind intensity of the storm was similar to that of 1949 (8-10 in the Beaufort Scale). However, the tidal wave along the coast was greater than that of 1949. Efforts by the peasants, cadres, party, and military personnel helped to minimize the damage.

From mid-July on, Chekiang and southern Kiangsu experienced drought. The hilly regions where cotton and hemp are cultivated were especially hard hit by drought. The recent rains in southern Fukien and southern Anhwei relieved the situation there somewhat. Northern Anhwei is still under the grip of drought; more than 1,137,000 mou in the three areas surrounding Kuai-chu, An-ch'ing, and Lu-an were seriously affected. In Tung-ch'eng Hsien, one third of the planted area was affected.

Agricultural pests, particularly aphids and red spiders, were effectively controlled and eradicated when discovered, but the locusts and moths types were very difficult to control. A most tenacious pest is the paddy rice moth which the peasants in East China are fighting and which have inflicted damage on the current crops.

A bumper harvest of early rice is reported in areas where there was no flood or drought. The average yield is from 300 to 400 catties per mou, with a maximum of 750 catties per mou. The average yield is about 20 percent greater than last year. The 7 million-mou yield of early rice in Fukien was the best harvest in the past 20 years. The majority of the yields in Chekiang reached prewar levels. In the Manchou area, the increase is about 30 percent of last year's yield. Lu-an, in northern Anhwei, yielded 150 to 170 catties per mou; this is about 30 percent more than last year.

All other crops are growing well in areas not affected by flood or drought.

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